



VENEZUELA: IMPERIALISM vs SOCIALISM?

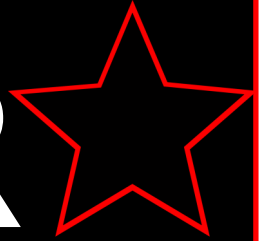


DIAGEO WORKERS STRIKE



EVRi WORKERS SHAFTED AGAIN!

BLACK STAR



RESIST WAR



FIGHT CAPITALISM

Governments across the world are increasingly trying to compel people into the ranks of their armed forces, if not to fight what former European Commission chief, Jacques Delors called the 'resource wars of the 21st century', then the usual over-arching clash of capital and empire. This comes after decades of European countries in particular phasing out compulsory military service after the Cold War and collapse of state communism. Of the NATO countries, some nine have conscription - Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden and Turkey. Outside of NATO, there is compulsory service in Austria, Cyprus and Switzerland, and so-called 'voluntary' schemes exist now in Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland and Bulgaria, with similar schemes also afoot in Czechia, France, Germany and Romania. Outside of Europe, the US still requires registration for potential service in the military as do the Chinese, the Russians have conscription as do the Ukrainians but even for states without it, the wars and rumours of wars that are the health of the state make this an illusion. Even without the current wave of homicidal adventures across the world in Palestine, Ukraine, Sudan, Myanmar, and many other places, nation states know that their very survival depends on the old adage of an external (or internal) enemy perceived as a common foe as a means of tranquilizing the population and summoning them to the flag. The death cult of nationalism demands this, but the 'defense of national interests' and the defense of capitalism are inseparable, whether in oil, gas and mineral resources or in so-called 'strategic' relations as seen most recently in Russia/Ukraine, Palestine, and Sudan. Venezuela is yet another example held up by some on the left who should know better as a beacon of state socialism literally fueled by its oil economy and now on the brink of a war with the US (even though the American company, Exxon, is one of their biggest friends), under the pretence of it being about the drug trade. Unsurprisingly, Maduro is drumming the working class into his expanding military for the salvation of '21st century socialism'.

Northern Anarcho-Syndicalist News from Organise!

Venezuela: IMPERIALISM VS SOCIALISM?



On 16 December, Trump took to his 'Truth' social media channel to announce a partial blockade of certain Venezuelan oil tankers, reportedly as part of his wider campaign against the Maduro regime. Although the oil carried by Chevron from Venezuela to the US is not an issue for Trump, the 'sanctioned' ships (although a minority overall), mainly trade with China, which seems to indicate the real reason behind the blockade. That, of course, isn't about individual states or their governments, but about maintaining US hegemony in the oil industry and stabilising world markets in their interests.

Of course, in Venezuela, it is being read as a de facto declaration of war and has actually given Maduro's regime a shot in the arm. He has been busy building the so-called Bolivarian Militia (known as the MNB), which claims 12.7 million members, though as the anarchist, Rafael Uzcátegui

recently revealed, the armed forces so-called 'fifth component' seems to 'have more to do with politics and social control than with military strategy'.

As the anarchist newspaper, *El Libertario*, said a few years ago 'Any criticism of the corrupt, inefficient and luxurious official bureaucracy is immediately labelled as "serving imperialism" and, under the excuse of "confronting coups and reactionary provocations", various laws have been enacted that penalize street actions and strikes in basic state enterprises with great rigour. These are part of the legal mechanisms that have been used since 2006 against popular mobilizations that, trying to recover their own demands, demonstrate every week for the right to personal security, decent housing, employment and decent working conditions. The government's response has been with tear gas, pellets and arrests'.

DIAGEO WORKERS TAKE ACTION



Workers at Diageo's canning operation for Guinness 0.0 in Belfast were on strike over pay disparity between their plants here and in England this month. 90 Unite members took part in the action between 12 and 19 December. The company has made tremendous profits from sales of the alcohol-free drink, launched in 2020 and

since that time drawing in about £50 million a year and yet if you're working at the Runcorn plant, you can expect to earn about 30% more for the same job. Diageo have had labour disputes at their Scottish plants for a few years over pay disparity between different plants there too, most of which were resolved with a pay increase last year. Solidarity with the Belfast strikers!



PA HUNGER STRIKE

Six Palestine Action activists remain on hunger strike after two others, Umar Khalid and Jon Cink, were forced to abandon their fast recently due to ill-health. All of the prisoners are being held on remand, originally with a promise to come to trial after six months, but who remain in jail a year later. Protests have taken place across the North in solidarity with the prisoners in their campaign. Organise! IWA-AIT have released the following statement of solidarity:

'As Qesser Zuhrah is finally taken to hospital (after a potentially fatal obstruction), Organise! IWA call for mass working class support of the hunger strikers against the ongoing genocide and wars taking place across the planet. Their demands are: 1. End censorship; 2. Immediate bail for the Palestine Action detainees; 3. A fair trial; 4. De-proscribe Palestine Action; 5. Shut down Elbit Systems. The British state must be met with a mass working class movement to not only end the internment of the Palestine Action detainees, but to oppose the genocide in Palestine and genocides and wars being conducted elsewhere. These are conducted by imperialist and capitalist interests and result in death, maiming, bereavement and destruction of the poor and working class across the globe'.



EVRI CHRISTMAS NIGHTMARE



In the lead-up to the usual Christmas madness, there was probably a more than usual number of complaints and consumer fury over delayed parcels. Most of the moaning and fuckin' whining came from online shoppers about the delivery company, Evri. "My wee Johnnie's tablet hasn't arrived"; "the fuckers threw my new foot spa into an alleyway in Craigavon"; "my cat's climbing frame and bells were ordered in SEPTEMBER, FFS" (three angry face emojis).

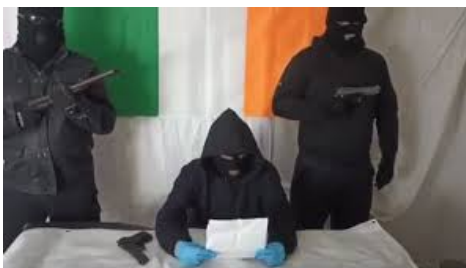
Evri are a gig economy model company owned by the German delivery company, Hermes. The BBC's Panorama programme recently focused on the pay cuts for the delivery of small items and the subsequent 'misbanding' of larger items to reduce wages further. Of course, Evri claims not to have workers though they are quick to cut pay rates even where deliveries are efficient and on time. It's all about cutting corners to maximise profits and screw over workers. Fuck the model, not the workers!

Republican socialist fascists



A new republican grouping emerged here recently (not another fuckin' one, I hear you cry!), with an openly fascist agenda, unlike some other republican groups who have a less open fascist agenda. Whether the proliferation of these nutjob outfits is a creation of the intelligence services or the natural by-product of disaster nationalism, it is a worrying trend. Of course, the lrps have led the way in all this from their encouragement of racist elements in Beechmount through to recent attacks in

Derry, where their campaigning against HMOs (house of multiple occupation), has led to the targeting of migrants and abusing asylum seekers in the streets. Beyond this, they had the fuckin' cheek recently of launching their Christmas Toy Appeal, whilst terrorising kids in attacks on the suspected houses of drug dealers (in other words, drug dealers who haven't paid their tax to the lrps). In an attack a few weeks' ago, they apologised for getting the wrong house due to faulty intelligence (insert your own joke here).



Meanwhile... in Ballymena



Christmas has come early for us in Ballymena this year - the Gallaher Trust, led by many hats Ian Paisley jnr. has announced a potential 100 jobs for the town, mainly in hospitality. Fuckin' whoop-de-fuckin'-do!

After closing their factory here in 2017, Gallaher's, then and now known as Japan Tobacco International Limited, proceeded to fight the unions through the courts to avoid pay-outs to elderly workers, some who had done in the region of thirty years at the factory. They left behind a trust fund to cover their embarrassment, silence their critics and invest in whatever Big Ian and his cohorts on the Committee felt was a deserving cause, what could possibly go wrong, eh?

Germany, Romania, Turkey and many other places now host Japan Tobacco International factories and their involvement in the Russian market and forced withdrawal from sponsorship of the British Museum has dogged them as much as allegations of black marketeering in recent years. Not that Ian Paisley and his muckers on the Trust will be spreading that around much, their job is to soft-pedal the Gallaher reputation here in the town that lost almost a thousand jobs to the bastards. I'm sure his 100 jobs will make up for it all, happy fuckin' Christmas, ya filthy animal!



Get Involved: Help Build A Working Class Alternative.



Organise! is an anarcho-syndicalist group in Ireland which is affiliated to the International Worker's Association as 'friends of' section. We take inspiration from the self directed struggles of working-class people, and particularly the history and tradition of struggle epitomised by the IWA - the anarcho-syndicalist international. Our history goes back to the original formation of Organise! by the Ballymena and Antrim Anarchist Groups in 1985. We are a growing, group of ordinary working class people who are fed up with being fucked about by the profit system, fed up with seeing our communities and workplaces torn apart by racism, patriarchy, nationalism and sectarianism, and sick of a greedy few getting rich off everyone else's backs.

We are actively working to promote solidarity in opposition to capitalism, the state, patriarchy and all other forms of oppression and hierarchy. The way we organise reflects the free society we want to create: one based on voluntary association, direct democratic participation and self-management.

Our members are workers, claimants, students, migrants, unemployed and other working-class people committed to building a libertarian communist union movement actively opposed to all forms of oppression and exploitation.

We want to improve everyday conditions for ourselves and other working class people, but we also struggle for the revolutionary transformation that can create a free and equal society, one based on mutual aid and co-operation. Sound crazy? Maybe it does, but in an era in which it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism the continuation of the present system is even crazier...

The current system isn't working – ill-health, stress and overwork affect more and more people while others are flung on the dole; for increasing amounts of workers it is precarity, zero hours contracts and the stress of being unable to plan or budget our lives; we live in a world of plentiful resources yet millions starve; some people make vast fortunes just because they own companies, land, property or natural resources, but those of us who create the wealth, work the land and build the properties are left struggling to survive; politicians tell us there's no money – not for wages, benefits or local amenities, but there's always plenty for war; both locally and globally the gap between the

richest and the poorest sections of society has never been so great; instead of a war on poverty they've got a war on 'benefit fraud', while the same system that creates war, poverty and environmental destruction stigmatises, imprisons and deports the resultant refugees.

We don't think these things are inevitable or coincidental, we think they are related to capitalism – an economic system defined by wage slavery and the accumulation of profit out of other people's work. So we support all workers against their bosses in demanding higher wages and better conditions. We try to intervene practically to support workers engaged in disputes and are also active in our own workplaces and communities. Not only against exploitation but against the multiple oppressions faced by members of the working class in all our diversity.

But it's not just a question of trying to struggle by in a world of exploitation and oppression; we look to a future where workers control production and society in their own interests. And unlike some people who claim to oppose capitalism, we don't want to be a new set of leaders and we refuse to be led by anyone else. We advocate direct democracy in the workplace and through the commune in our communities – working in federation to ensure that the needs of all are met and that no-one is ever again in a position to oppress or exploit another human being.

If you are interested in these ideas, we'd encourage you to explore our website and consider getting involved.

We currently have members in Belfast, Cavan, Derry, Dublin, Lisburn, Monaghan, Newry, Newtownabbey and Portadown and are building the organisation on the basis of active involvement and participation. Contact your nearest Local or Local in formation to get involved.

Belfast Local: organiseiwabelfastlocal@gmail.com

South Ulster Local: suanorganiseiwa@mf.me

Dublin Local in formation: organiseasidublin@gmail.com

We aren't interested in meaningless 'paper' membership so you can't join by filling in an online form and bunging us a few quid. Every member is an active member.

To talk to us about joining get the ball rolling, check out our website at <https://organiseanarchistsireland.com> and send an email to: organiseasi@gmail.com

